

**REMARKS**

Claims 21-23 have been amended. Claim 26 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. No claims have been added. Accordingly, claims 21-23 are currently pending in the application.

**PRIORITY**

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgement of the claim for priority and receipt of the priority document in prior application Serial No. 09/582,327.

**ABSTRACT**

The Abstract has been amended as requested by the Examiner.

**CLAIM OBJECTIONS**

Claims 21-23 have been amended to overcome the Examiner's objections.

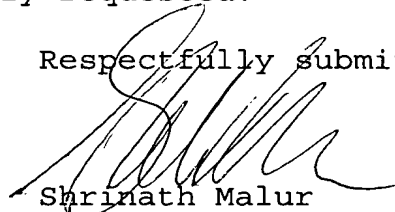
**35 U.S.C. §102**

Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Mutoh et al. This rejection has been rendered moot by the cancellation of this claim without prejudice or disclaimer in order to expedite the issuance of subject matter indicated as being allowable.

**CONCLUSION**

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants contend that the above-identified application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and reexamination are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Shrinath Malur  
Registration No. 34,663  
Attorney for Applicants

MATTINGLY, STANGER & MALUR  
1800 Diagonal Rd., Suite 370  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314  
(703) 684-1120  
Date: September 11, 2003